



Vince Ryan
Harris County Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 5, 2011

**PLAN TO PLUG DANGEROUS DIOXIN FROM LEAKING INTO THE
WATERWAYS AT SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS IS NEAR
COMPLETION**

County Attorney Vince Ryan Invites Press to View the Site

Vince Ryan, Harris County Attorney, is scheduled to appear at the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site to report on the success of containing dangerous dioxin that has been leaking into the waterways. The press conference is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, July 6th, 2011, at 11:00 AM. Directions to the site are provided below.

“This is a major milestone in protecting the health of our residents and their children who swim and fish in these waterways. I have been pushing for a solution to stop the ongoing release of dioxin into the San Jacinto River, and we are very pleased that the U.S. EPA and the companies are at the end of the beginning of containing the wastes,” said Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan.

When County Attorney Ryan was elected to office, he identified the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site as a major environmental hazard affecting the people of Harris County. Not only are people who eat fish and crab near the site at risk, but so are people downstream all the way to the Galveston Bay.

As part of collaborative efforts between the County, State, and the responsible companies, a short-term plan to build a physical protective barrier to contain the release of dioxin into the river was developed which is now at near completion.

The San Jacinto River Waste Pits are part of a federal EPA program known as Superfund to clean up the site. The partially submerged superfund site is located primarily north of the Interstate Highway 10 Bridge over the San Jacinto River. During the late 1960s, pits next to the river were filled with dioxin-laden paper waste from a nearby paper mill. Over time, due to local subsidence, the San Jacinto River flowed into and through these pits spreading dioxin, one of the deadliest man-made chemicals in the world, into the waterways. Harris County, the EPA, and its partners continue to raise community awareness about the waste pits, while EPA-led investigation and assessment focuses on finding a long-term permanent solution for the waste pits.

Contact: Terence O’Rourke, First Assistant Harris County Attorney
713-755-7880 (office)
713-302-7594 (cell)
terence.orourke@cao.hctx.net

Directions to Guard Shack at San Jacinto River Waste Pits Site.

1. Take Interstate 10 East.
2. Take exit 786 toward Monmouth Dr
3. Turn left onto Monmouth St
4. Turn right onto Lincoln St
5. Continue onto E. Freeway Service Rd. to guard shack.